As shown in FIG. 5, the strips **14** and **15** preferably are magnetized to provide magnetic fields emanating from sequentially alternating pole faces along the length of the plastic members.

One of the plastic members, such as the member **14**, for example, may be bonded by a suitable bonding layer **16** or may be mechanically fixedly attached to a marginal flange **17** of the receptacle **12**.

The other plastic member, such as the member **15**, is bonded or mechanically fastened to a plate **18** having studs **19** projecting through slots **21** in a wall surface **22** of the closure **13**. Attached to the plate **18** is a centrally positioned shaft **23** carrying a knob **24**. The knob **24** is manually reciprocable in a recess **25** in the outer panel **26** of the closure **13**. Suitable springs **27** are anchored to an inner wall **28** and to the shaft **23** carrying the knob **24**.

In closed position of the closure **13**, the two plastic members **14** and **15** are in abutting relation to each other as shown in FIG. 3. In this abutting relation, the pole faces of opposite polarity are in alignment with each other as shown in FIG. 5. That is, each section of the strip **14** having a north pole is in abutting relation to a section of the strip **15** having a south pole, each section of the strip **14** having a south pole is in abutting relation to a section of the strip **15** having a north pole, and so on. There is thus created closed magnetic paths for creating a magnetic force to hold the closure in closed position.

It would be possible to open the closure **13** by pulling on the knob **24** in a direction normal to the surfaces of the magnetic members **14** and **15**. It is contemplated, however, that relatively strong magnets will be used to insure that the closure will not be popped open upon any sudden shock encountered by the vehicle body. As a result, anyone having a relatively weak grip or perhaps fingers too large to suitably grasp the knob **24** to pull the latter in a direction normal to the plastic member surfaces will be unable to exert sufficient force to overcome the magnetic attraction between the two plastic members **14** and **15**.

Relatively less force is required to slide the two plastic members **14** and **15** relative to each other. Therefore, if the knob **24** is pushed in the direction of the arrow **29** in FIG. 3, a condition is created in which the pole faces on the strip **15** are shifted laterally so that like poles will be in abutting relation on the two plastic members **14** and **15**. Since the magnetic fields of like poles oppose each other, the closure **13** will be forced in the direction of the arrow **31** in FIG. 4. Closure **13** thus will be moved from the "latched" position in FIG. 3 to the "unlatched" condition of FIG. 4 so that access to the interior of receptacle **12** may be readily obtained.

Upon release of the knob **24** the springs **27** will center the plastic member **15** in its normal position, as shown in FIG. 3, so that the next time the closure **13** is swung to a closed position pole faces of unlike polarity on the strips **14** and **15** again will be in alignment and the closure will be snapped shut as soon as the magnetic fields of the two plastic strips come into overlapping relationship.

It will be readily understood that the latching arrangement disclosed in the present invention is readily applicable to refrigerator doors, cabinet doors or any other closures which are retained in closed position by magnetic devices.

It is to be understood that this invention is not limited to the exact construction illustrated and described above or in the abstract preceding the specification, but that various changes and modifications may be made without departing from the scope and spirit of the invention.

We claim:

1. A magnetic latch for a receptacle having an opening and a closure for said opening,

said magnetic latch comprising plastic members formed of magnetic material blended into a plastic material,

a first retaining means mounting one of said plastic members on a receptacle surface,

a second retaining means mounting another of said plastic members on a closure surface,

the magnetic material in each of said plastic members being magnetized to provide magnetic fields emanating from sequentially alternating pole faces along the plastic members,

said plastic members in closed position of the closure being positioned with pole faces of opposite polarity abutting each other to provide closed magnetic paths for creating a magnetic force to hold the closure in closed position,

the improvement comprising:

one of said retaining means mounting its associated plastic member for movement relative to the surface on which it is mounted,

the other of said retaining means fixedly holding its associated plastic member on the surface to which it is mounted,

and operating means including an operating member for moving the movable plastic member relative to the fixed plastic member in a plane parallel to the abutting surfaces to position like pole faces in abutting relation to each other so that the respective magnetic fields will be in operation thereby creating a magnetic force urging said closure toward an open position,

said operating means including resilient means restoring said movable plastic member to premoved position upon release of the operating member.

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